Cody, Karen

From:

Holliday, Janet

Sent:

Thursday, April 19, 2018 7:37 AM

To:

Cody, Karen

Subject:

FW: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation (interview questions)

Attachments:

Follow up Email La Pasion River Analytical Results 8-6-2015.pdf; Follow up Email La Pasion River Analytical Results 8-19-2015.pdf; Follow up Email La Pasion River Analytical

Results 8-18-2015.pdf

Karen,

Please see below and attachments for the response to the FOIA request "The Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation", tracking # EPA-R4-2018-006395.

Janet Holliday

Executive Assistant to
Jeaneanne M. Gettle, Director
Science and Ecosystem Support Division
980 College Station Road
Athens, Georgia 30605
(706) 355-8700

From: Castillo, Jairo

Sent: Wednesday, April 18, 2018 4:35 PM To: Holliday, Janet <holliday.janet@epa.gov>

Cc: Ruiz, John <Ruiz.John@epa.gov>; Deatrick, John <Deatrick.John@epa.gov>; Bowden, Mike <Bowden.Mike@epa.gov>

Subject: FW: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation (interview questions)

Janet,

Below are the answers of the FOIA, delivered as interview questions from Ms. Jocelyn C. Zuckerman to Larry Lincoln on 10/13/2017. As the FOIA from Ms. Jocelyn C. Zuckerman stated, she did not receive the answers.

Also, attached are the email related to the request of the Analytical Results of the La Pasion River Sampling (7/2015). Two of the emails are in Spanish, but google translate should help the requester understand the message. No response was received from these requests.

Any additional documentation concerning the reason the Guatemala Ministry of the Environment did not provide the Sampling Results Report or the Fish Sampling Protocols needs to be request it to the Guatemala Ministry of the Environment. EPA requested the information, but no one at the Ministry knew where to find it, since management was changed due to a president change, and the technical personnel did not receive any updates about the sampling results, Malathion sampling results, nor the fish sampling protocols used in the Fish Kill event.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Jairo Castillo-Valenzuela, P.E., MSCE Enforcement Section Field Services Branch SESD EPA Region 4, Athens, GA 706-355-8621

"If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing badly"

-Gilbert K. Chesterton

From: Lincoln, Larry

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2017 3:00 PM

To: Castillo, Jairo <Castillo.Jairo@epa.gov>; Deatrick, John <Deatrick.John@epa.gov>

Cc: Korgi, Al <Korgi.Al@epa.gov>; Gettle, Jeaneanne <Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov>; Mundrick, Doug

< <u>Mundrick.Doug@epa.gov</u>>; Bowden, Mike < <u>Bowden.Mike@epa.gov</u>> **Subject:** RE: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation (interview questions)

Thank you!

Larry

Director

Office of External Affairs

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4

Phone: (404) 562-8304

Email: lincoln.larry@epa.gov

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And Facebook: www.facebook.com/eparegion4

From: Castillo, Jairo

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2017 2:45 PM

To: Lincoln, Larry <Lincoln.Larry@epa.gov>; Deatrick, John <Deatrick.John@epa.gov>

Cc: Korgi, Al <Korgi.Al@epa.gov>; Gettle, Jeaneanne <Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov>; Mundrick, Doug

< <u>Mundrick.Doug@epa.gov</u>>; Bowden, Mike < <u>Bowden.Mike@epa.gov</u>> Subject: FW: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation (interview questions)

Larry,

Below is included the answers to the reporter questions. Let me know if you have any other questions or comments.

1. As of the writing of the report (September 16, 2015), EPA had not been given the surface water sample analytical results from sampling activities conducted on July 7, 2015. On page 9 of the report it says, "Upon completion of the analytical results, the results and their interpretation will be provided in an additional report."

I'm hoping you can send that additional report along. (If for some reason there was never an additional report done, can you explain why?)

The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) did not receive the analytical results from the sampling activities conducted on July 7, 2015. On June 2017, I had the opportunity to ask about the status of the analytical results during a workshop conducted in Guatemala City. Guatemala for the Ministry of the Environment (MARN), MARN personnel revealed that they haven't seen the analytical results either. The USEPA doesn't know the reason behind why those analytical results were never share with the Agency (USEPA).

2. Similarly, EPA had not received technical documentation related to the fish sampling protocols performed during the fish kill investigation and fish tissue toxicity analytical results. Has the agency since received these and if so, please provide those results.

The USEPA did not receive documentation related to the fish sampling protocols used during the fish kill investigation.

3. At the top of page 11, the following note appears in boldface type:

"Even though Malathion was mentioned as one of the suspected pollutants in the Pasion River fish kill and EPA recognized the potential pollution effects of this pesticide, the Malathion's analytical results were not shared with the EPA team. Consequently, the agency cannot formulate a technical opinion on this particular case. If the Malathion analytical results are provided, EPA will be available to present a technical opinion on this matter, if requested."

Were the Malathion analytical results subsequently provided, and if so, please send EPA's technical opinion. If those results were not provided, please explain why.

The USEPA did not receive the Malathion analytical results. As noted earlier, the Guatemalan Ministry of the Environment confirmed in June 2017, that they haven't seen the Malathion analytical results either.

Regards,

From: Lincoln, Larry

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2017 9:06 AM

To: Deatrick, John < Deatrick. John@epa.gov >; Korgi, Al < Korgi. Al@epa.gov >; Castillo, Jairo < Castillo. Jairo@epa.gov > Cc: Gettle, Jeaneanne < Gettle. Jeaneanne@epa.gov >; Mundrick, Doug < Mundrick. Doug@epa.gov >; Bowden, Mike < Bowden. Mike@epa.gov >

Subject: RE: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation (interview questions)

Thank you!

Larry

Director
Office of External Affairs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4

Phone: (404) 562-8304

Email: lincoln.larry@epa.gov

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And Facebook: www.facebook.com/eparegion4

From: Deatrick, John

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2017 8:52 AM

To: Lincoln, Larry < Lincoln.Larry@epa.gov >; Korgi, Al < Korgi.Al@epa.gov >; Castillo, Jairo < Castillo.Jairo@epa.gov > Cc: Gettle, Jeaneanne < Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov >; Mundrick, Doug < Mundrick.Doug@epa.gov >; Bowden, Mike

<Bowden.Mike@epa.gov>

Subject: RE: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation (interview questions)

Larry,

Jairo indicated to me that the Ministry has not provided any of the information to EPA that the reporter asked about, but I will ask Jairo to provide you his written response to each of the questions.

Thanks,

John

From: Lincoln, Larry

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2017 8:49 AM

To: Deatrick, John < Deatrick. John@epa.gov >; Korgi, Al < Korgi. Al@epa.gov >; Castillo, Jairo < Castillo. Jairo@epa.gov >

Cc: Gettle, Jeaneanne < Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov >; Mundrick, Doug < Mundrick.Doug@epa.gov >

Subject: RE: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation (interview questions)

John, et al.,

There seems to be a lot of moving parts with this request. After communicating with HQ I offered to check back with the SESD subject matter expert (Jairo) to determine if he can provide answers to the reporter's questions. If he does have the answers, I'd ask that he provide written responses to me for coordination with HQ. I've cc'ed him on this message.

Thanks,

Larry

Director

Office of External Affairs

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4

Phone: (404) 562-8304 Email: lincoln.larry@epa.gov

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From: Deatrick, John

Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2017 3:54 PM

To: Lincoln, Larry < Lincoln.Larry@epa.gov >; Korgi, Al < Korgi.Al@epa.gov >

Cc: Gettle, Jeaneanne < Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov >; Mundrick, Doug < Mundrick.Doug@epa.gov >

Subject: RE: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation (interview questions)

Thanks Larry. Let me know if you need anything.

From: Lincoln, Larry

Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2017 3:48 PM

To: Deatrick, John < Deatrick. John@epa.gov >; Korgi, Al < Korgi. Al@epa.gov >

Cc: Gettle, Jeaneanne < Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov >; Mundrick, Doug < Mundrick.Doug@epa.gov >

Subject: RE: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation (interview questions)

John,

Yes, I've been in contact with HQ on this earlier today.

Thanks,

Larry

Director

Office of External Affairs

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4

Phone: (404) 562-8304 Email: lincoln.larry@epa.gov

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And Facebook: www.facebook.com/eparegion4

From: Deatrick, John

Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2017 3:46 PM

To: Korgi, Al < Korgi. Al@epa.gov>

Cc: Lincoln, Larry < Lincoln.Larry@epa.gov >; Gettle, Jeaneanne < Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov >; Mundrick, Doug

<Mundrick.Doug@epa.gov>

Subject: FW: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation (interview questions)

AI,

I think Jairo has already spoken with you, but I wanted to be sure you were aware that HQ received inquiry from a reporter regarding the Pasion River fish kill work conducted in 2015 in Guatemala. Jairo was blind copied on the email below that provides the details of the inquiry.

Let me know if you receive any info requests from HQ or need any information from us.

Thanks,

John

From: Castillo, Jairo

Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2017 2:32 PM
To: Deatrick, John < Deatrick. John@epa.gov >

Subject: FW: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation (interview questions)

FYI

Jairo Castillo-Valenzuela, P.E., MSCE Enforcement Section Field Services Branch SESD EPA Region 4, Athens, GA

706-355-8621

"If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing badly"

-Gilbert K. Chesterton

From: Jocelyn Zuckerman [mailto:jocelynzuck@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2017 1:51 PM To: Lynn, Tricia < lynn.tricia@epa.gov>

Subject: Re: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation

Dear Tricia.

Thanks so much for getting back to me, and apologies for my extreme delay. I had been focused on some other chapters but am now back to concentrating on Guatemala.

My questions are in regard to the report attached below.

1. As of the writing of the report (September 16, 2015), EPA had not been given the surface water sample analytical results from sampling activities conducted on July 7, 2015. On page 9 of the report it says, "Upon completion of the analytical results, the results and their interpretation will be provided in an additional report."

I'm hoping you can send that additional report along. (If for some reason there was never an additional report done, can you explain why?)

2. Similarly, EPA had not received technical documentation related to the fish sampling protocols performed during the fish kill investigation and fish tissue toxicity analytical results. Has the agency since received these and if so, please provide those results.

3. At the top of page 11, the following note appears in boldface type: "Even though Malathion was mentioned as one of the suspected pollutants in the Pasion River fish kill and EPA recognized the potential pollution effects of this pesticide, the Malathion's analytical results were not shared with the EPA team. Consequently, the agency cannot formulate a technical opinion on this particular case. If the Malathion analytical results are provided, EPA will be available to present a technical opinion on this matter, if requested."
Were the Malathion analytical results subsequently provided, and if so, please send EPA's technical opinion. If those results were not provided, please explain why.
Thanks so much and please let me know if you need further clarification.
All best, Jocelyn Zuckerman
4.
On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 4:14 PM, Lynn, Tricia < lynn.tricia@epa.gov > wrote:
Hi Jocelyn—
Your EPA inquiry has made its way to me, and I'm happy to help get you answers. I'm also happy to check into the possibility of an interview, though they aren't always available.
In either case, can you please send me a list of your specific questions as well as your hard deadline so I can get started on your request?
Thanks so much,
Tricia
Tricia Lynn

Office of Public Affairs
U.S. EPA
Office: 202.564.2615
From: Jocelyn Zuckerman [mailto:jocelynzuck@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 6:47 PM
To: Castillo, Jairo < Castillo.Jairo@epa.gov < mailto: Castillo.Jairo@epa.gov >>
Subject: Pasion River Fish Kill Investigation
Hello, Jairo Castillo.
I hope you won't mind my emailing you directly. I am a New York-based journalist currently working on a book and a series of articles about palm oil. (You can see some stories on my website below.)
·
I am currently looking into the situation with the Pasion River and the incidents that took place in the Peten in June, 2015. I have a copy of your report and was hoping you might be able to answer a few questions about it.
Might you be available for a phone conversation (whether on the record or off) sometime next week?
Thanks so much and have a great weekend,
Jocelyn

Jocelyn C. Zuckerman

917.715.0424

www.jocelynczuckerman.comhttp://www.jocelynczuckerman.com

<15-0383- EPA Guatemala Fish Kill Investigation Report.pdf>

Jocelyn C. Zuckerman

917.715.0424

www.jocelynczuckerman.com

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Castillo, Jairo

From:

Castillo, Jairo

Sent:

Thursday, August 06, 2015 10:36 AM

To:

Korgi, Al

Cc:

Quinones, Antonio; Ruiz, John; Gonzalez, Orlando; Ruben Aleman

Subject:

RE: Denuncian a dos empresas palmeras

AI,

We are still waiting for the lab results and the fish kill info from the University of FL contact.

Thanks,

Jairo Castillo-Valenzuela, P.E., LEED AP Environmental Engineer Field Services Branch SESD EPA Region 4, Athens, GA 706-355-8621

From: Korgi, Al

Sent: Thursday, August 06, 2015 9:53 AM

To: Castillo, Jairo

Cc: Quinones, Antonio; Ruiz, John; Gonzalez, Orlando; Ruben Aleman

Subject: RE: Denuncian a dos empresas palmeras

Jairo,

Thanks for sharing news. Have you or John received any lab results from Guatemala or from the Univ of FL on fish tissue?

I found an article discussing the UN's report on the investigation the Guatemalan Office carried out of the fish kill, see below.

http://www.s21.com.gt/cabildo-abierto/2015/07/27/pasion-rio-impunidad-corrupcion

Al

From: Castillo, Jairo

Sent: Thursday, August 06, 2015 8:39 AM

To: Korgi, Al

Cc: Quinones, Antonio

Subject: FW: Denuncian a dos empresas palmeras

Noticia reciente.

Jairo Castillo-Valenzuela, P.E., LEED AP Environmental Engineer Field Services Branch SESD EPA Region 4, Athens, GA 706-355-8621

From: Carmen Gonzalez [mailto:carmen.gonzalez@one.un.org]

Sent: Thursday, August 06, 2015 1:25 AM

To: Castillo, Jairo; Ruiz, John

Subject: Fwd: Denuncian a dos empresas palmeras

Hello Jairo and John

Hope you are doing well, see attached news on recent developments on the Rio la Pasion contamination.

Regards,

Carmen Aida

Enviado desde mi iPhone

Inicio del mensaje reenviado:

De: Redhum Guatemala < guatemala@redhum.org>

Fecha: 5 de agosto de 2015, 9:02:17 GMT-6

Para: Valerie Julliand < valerie.julliand@one.un.org >, Edy Manolo Barillas Cruz

<edy.barillas@undp.org>, Rosa Malango <rosa.malango@one.un.org>, "Carmen Gonzalez" <carmen.gonzalez@one.un.org>, Karla Castillo <karla.castillo@undp.org>, Osvaldo Lapuente

<osvaldo.lapuente@one.un.org>, Hector Morales <hector.morales@one.un.org>

Asunto: Denuncian a dos empresas palmeras

Denuncian a dos empresas palmeras

El Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (MARN) accionó penalmente contra las empresas Reforestadora de Palma, S. A. (Repsa), y Palmera Nacional Industrial, S. A., 2 de las 5 compañías dedicadas al cultivo de palma africana en la ribera del río La Pasión, en Sayaxché, Petén, debido a que han incurrido en mal manejo de aguas residuales y permitido el rebalse de sus lagunas de oxidación, indicó Carlos Monterroso, vicetitular de esa cartera.

El funcionario explicó las acciones implementadas para evitar desastres como el acontecido en junio, y destacó las continuas visitas a las industrias que se dedican a este cultivo, con el fin de garantizar que cuentan con todos los registros. Jorge Estrada, gerente de Repsa, desmintió los señalamientos y afirmó: "Vamos a colaborar porque todo lo tenemos en orden".

Mientras tanto. la Comisión Presidencial contra la Discriminación y el Racismo (Codisra) está elaborando un estudio de impacto social sobre la catástrofe, con el cual busca determinar las pérdidas económicas que la muerte de especies marinas ha representado para los comunitarios, quienes, en su mayoría, dependen de la pesca para subsistir, dijo María Trinidad Gutiérrez, titular de esa entidad.

Link http://www.dca.gob.gt/index.php/nacional/item/33328-denuncian-a-dos-empresas-palmeras

--

Ines E.Camas Fahsen

Redhum Guatemala

Oficina de Naciones Unidas para la Coordinación de Asuntos Humanitarios - OCHA ROLAC

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quatemala@redhum.org

Skype: ines.eugenia.camas.fahsen

www.redhum.org

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Castillo, Jairo

From:

Castillo, Jairo

Sent:

Wednesday, August 19, 2015 9:23 AM

To:

Korgi, Al

Subject:

RE: OFICIO 1162

Ok. Ayer comencé a trabajar en el reporte. Hace dos semanas les solicité que me enviaran los informes de laboratorio de los muestreos anteriores y del último evento, ayer les volví a escribir, pero aun no los han enviado.

Tampoco hemos tenido respuesta de la información requerida en relación a los procedimientos de la toma de peces durante el evento.

Lo mantengo informado.

Jairo Castillo-Valenzuela, P.E., LEED AP Environmental Engineer Field Services Branch SESD EPA Region 4, Athens, GA 706-355-8621

From: Korgi, Al

Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2015 8:48 AM

To: Castillo, Jairo

Subject: FW: OFICIO 1162

Jairo, FYI

Al

From: Ruben Aleman [mailto:raleman@usaid.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2015 7:35 PM

To: Gonzalez, Orlando; Korgi, Al Subject: Fwd: OFICIO 1162

FYI

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Glendy Valladares <gvalladares@marn.gob.gt>

Date: 18 de agosto de 2015 16:43:52 GMT-6
To: "ghowell@usaid.gov" <ghowell@usaid.gov>

Cc: "jseuc@usaid.gov" < jseuc@usaid.gov >, Teresa Robles < TRobles@usaid.gov >, "raleman@usaid.gov"

<raleman@usaid.gov>, Juan Carlos Diaz Contreras < jcdiaz@marn.gob.gt>

Subject: OFICIO 1162

Señor Greg Howell

Director de la Oficina de Crecimiento Económico

USAID/EI Salvador

Por instrucciones del Señor Ministro de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales, Ingeniero Oscar Ernesto Medinilla Sánchez, adjunto oficio No. MI-1162-2015/OEMS-gpvg, por medio del cual solicita su colaboración a efecto de trasladarnos el informe o documento final que contenga el análisis y conclusiones de los resultado del apoyo brindado por los expertos, en el río la Pasión del Municipio de Sayaxche, Departamento de Petén.

Agradeciendo confirme de recibido.

Atentamente,

Glendy Valladares Asistente Despacho Ministerial Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales Tel. 24230500 ext. 1208 20 calle 28-58, zona 10, Edificio MARN

Castillo, Jairo

From:

Castillo, Jairo

Sent:

Tuesday, August 18, 2015 1:08 PM

To:

Carlos Mazariegos

Subject:

Saludos!

Hola Ing. Carlos Mazariegos,

Espero todo les vaya bien. Esta semana estoy de regreso en la oficina de mi viaje a Chile de 10 días. Estábamos dando un adiestramiento.

Me gustaría conocer el estatus de los resultados de laboratorio del muestreo en el Rio La Pasión efectuado en la semana del 6 de Julio de 2015. También si podría enviarnos los informes del laboratorio de los muestreos realizados en los meses de Mayo y Junio pasados, sería de gran ayuda.

Saludos,

Jairo Castillo-Valenzuela, P.E., LEED AP Environmental Engineer Field Services Branch SESD EPA Region 4, Athens, GA 706-355-8621

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